

Notes from Concept Team Meeting- 7/7/2020, 3:00 pm, Virtual

Members Present: Mary Lane, Tom Devilbiss, Clay Black, Lynda Eisenberg, Paige Sunderland, and Hannah Weber.

The meeting began at 3:00 pm. The first item on the agenda was approval of the February 28 meeting notes. The meeting notes were approved without any changes.

The next item on the agenda was a discussion of the path forward. Specifically discussed were how to conduct the interagency staff meetings, opportunities for public involvement and the goal for completion. It was agreed that these issues should be discussed with the Board of County Commissioners. Lynda will schedule a briefing to update the Board on the status of this effort and solicit feedback.

The main point of discussion was cluster development in the residential districts. The group reviewed a summary of the applicable land use definitions, goals and recommendations from the recently adopted land use plans, Chapter 158 definitions related to cluster, the purposes of the cluster development technique, current cluster development regulations in Chapter 155, a history of its use in Carroll County over the past twenty years, and cluster development in other jurisdictions. There was discussion of the advantages of this type of development, and whether it should be mandatory in the R-20,000 District. It was agreed it should remain optional. Also discussed was how to make it a more desirable option for developers, while remaining consistent with the land use plans.

It was noted that Carroll County is the only jurisdiction in the region that requires submittal of a conventional plan to determine the lot yield of the specific site; most other jurisdictions simply require the yield to be no greater than the zoning allows. Depending on the constraints of a specific site, this may allow for a greater number of lots than would be able to be shown on a traditional, non-cluster plan. After considerable discussion, it was agreed that the requirement for submittal of a conventional plan should be eliminated, and the number of lots should be as is permitted in the zoning district. For example, in the R-20,000 District, the total yield on 50 acres would be 100 homes. It was noted that this calculation was what was envisioned in the development of the County Master Plan and Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan. There was concern that on a site with considerable environmental constraints, the allowance of this gross yield may result in lot sizes that are smaller than envisioned. Therefore, it was agreed that in the R-20,000 District, lot size may not be less than 10,000 square feet, and in the R-10,000 District it may not be less than 7,500 square feet. A review of approved cluster developments in the County shows that this is consistent with what has been approved in the past. These minimum lot sizes are not subject to a variance.

It was agreed that front, side and rear yards should remain flexible and at the discretion of the Planning Commission when approving a site plan. Only single-family dwellings shall be permitted, as is currently the requirement.

Several additional proposals have been received by the group, including the use of Development Rights and Responsibilities Agreements (DRRA) in the County, and a change in Chapter 156, Concurrency Management, to allow more residential permits to be pulled in a single year. It was agreed that this will be discussed with the BCC, but is probably outside of the scope of the Concept Team's review.

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 pm.